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PRIVATE LETTERS
OF A
FRENCH WOMAN.

BY
MADEMOISELLE CLAIRE FOLDAIROLLES.
(*The French Governess.*)



NEW YORK:

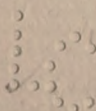
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Bequest
Albert Adsit Clemons
Aug. 24, 1938
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TO
MY AMERICAN PUPILS
WHO HAVE TAUGHT ME MUCH MORE THAN I
HAVE EVER BEEN ABLE TO TEACH THEM
AND PAID ME MOST LIBERALLY
INTO THE BARGAIN.
I DEDICATE THESE PAGES WITH A THOUSAND
THANKS AND A THOUSAND
KIND REMEMBRANCES.

CLAIRE FOLDAIROLLES.
(*The French Governess.*)

NEW YORK, *April*, 1895.

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PRIVATE LETTERS
OF A
FRENCH WOMAN.

I.
DIVORCELETS.

Yes, dear Countess, you're right, I would have made an admirable mother, and it's a great shame that the right man never came along, for in spite of the fact that I have "remained single and talked of population," it has always been my opinion that Dr. Goldsmith was right in saying that the

honest man (or woman, of course) who marries and brings up a large family is a real public benefactor.

Not that I would have been ambitious to emulate the example of Count Abensberg, who in Henry II.'s progress presented a family of twenty-three children to that monarch; but, if they could have been healthy in mind and body, I shouldn't have objected to a good half-dozen. But the good Lord had other uses for me. It has not been given unto me to sit by my own fireside and spin, or to throw the shuttle in my own loom. I have been forced to content myself with the crumbs that fall from masters' tables; to spend the strength

of my maternal instinct on other women's children.

Hence my interest in babies, and hence my solicitude for "divorcelets," made orphans by decree of divorce courts, for when man and woman cease to be husband and wife they cease to be father and mother.

Is my woman's reasoning defective? Pardy, I trow not. True, your decree may make ample provision for the "care and custody" of the infant, but, alas, dear Countess, what provision does your decree make for tender love and watchful care, for home influences, for the potent force of example, for the divine effect of that "one

flesh " mystery which makes it impossible for the child to tell whether he loves papa or mamma best ?

What provision does your decree make for the now " lacking half " which was always ready to piece out, strengthen and complete the celestial partnership ? What assurance does your decree give that the divorcelet now condemned to love two masters shall not end by hating one or both of them.

Even Solomon in his wide range of thought never seems to have put this question to himself.

What becomes of the stock when the firm of Man, Wife, Love & Co. apply for a

decree of dissolution? In any ordinary, earthly co-partnership, it is easy enough to dispose of the assets, and to apply them as far as they will go to the payment of the firm's debts; but you cannot put babies up at auction; you cannot even specify that the divorced parties have each an undivided half-interest in the divorcelets.

One or the other of the parents must be annihilated, be put to death by order of the court.

Oh, murder most foul, and yet how ready is the magistrate of to-day to decree it. It's terrible! And yet, dear Countess, it does seem that there is no help for it—that the world must go on marrying and giving

in marriage, go on making children, go on creating divorcelets.

I don't know whether it will interest you or not, dear Countess, but I take the liberty to send you a copy of a very strange letter which was composed by one of my pupils—and you will hardly credit it when I tell you a child of twelve. But these wonderful Americans are not hampered by such ordinary limitations as sex, age, education or environment.

LETTER FROM A DIVORCELET TO A
SCHOOL FRIEND.

“DEAR HALLIE:—Since I saw you last I have had my picture in the papers. Just

think of it! It wasn't very good, however. Well, I must tell you all about it.

"You see, papa and mamma made up their minds to get a 'divorce.' That's what everybody's papa and mamma ask for when they can't get along together. You go to a place called the court for it. I've been there twice, and the men crowded around me to get a look at me, but I wasn't frightened a bit, for one said, 'What a beautiful child,' and another whispered, 'Isn't she a little princess.' Well, you see, to get a 'divorce,' as they call it, it is necessary to prove that one's papa or mamma has been bad.

"I don't know how bad, but pretty bad,

anyway. You will laugh when I tell you that mamma said that papa was bad and papa said that mamma was bad. Good gracious, Hallie, if they are both bad, why, then, I must be bad, too. But I don't feel so, strange to say. Any way, Mademoiselle says I am one of the best girls in her classes, and Mademoiselle knows what she is talking about, for she comes from Paris. Oh, I do want to go to Paris so much. They say it is lovely there, and I believe it, for just see what lovely things French heels are, and French candies, too. Oh, my, oh, my!

“Well, don't tell any one, but it turned out that poor papa was really the bad one,

after all. I can't believe it, he is so sweet, so good, so kind, so loving. He didn't seem to care, and when I said : ' Papa, are you a bad man ? ' he only smiled and answered : ' No, my darling ; I'm only making believe, just to please mamma.'

" Did you ever hear anything so ridiculous, Hallie ? But I tell you it must be great sport to please people by being bad. I'd like to try just to see how it feels, wouldn't you ? But the man in the court thought papa was bad in good earnest, for he looked very solemn, and then said, in a deep voice, that he was sorry, but that he was obliged to undo papa and mamma. You know what I mean—untie them. And then I whispered to mamma and said :

“‘ But what is to become of me ?’”

“‘ Oh, you’ll come to me, darling,’ she replied. ‘You’ll be all mine—all mine forever.’”

“‘ But, said I. ‘I want papa to have some of me, too. It isn’t fair. You know how he loves to romp with me mornings, to carry me up to bed when I fall asleep in his arms, to bring me candies, to sit by me when I am sick, to take me out for a walk, to buy me birthday and Christmas presents, to—to—’”

“‘ Sh, darling! be quiet,’ said mamma. “‘ You may go to see your father if he gets to be a good man and promises on his sacred word not to set you against me.’”

“ ‘ See here, mamma,’ I cried, ‘ you shan’t talk that way about papa. I won’t have it. He is only making believe bad, and he said you asked him to do so, so that the man in the court could untie you.

“ ‘ I belong half to him and half to you, and you shan’t cheat him out of his half, I can tell you that, now. You may not love him any more, but that’s nothing to me. You don’t like ice cream since you had the typhoid fever, but you know I just love it. I could eat it three times a day.’

“ ‘ But, my darling, my darling,’ exclaimed mamma, ‘ listen to reason. Your father—’

“ ‘ You shan’t call him my father,’ I re-

plied, snapping my eyes at her. ‘He is my papa, my dear, dear papa, and I am going to stand up for his rights if I die for it, and for your rights, too. I don’t care a snap what that man in the court said, he is nothing to me. Who gave him the right to take me away from papa? Doesn’t the Bible say: “Honor thy father and thy mother,” and isn’t God’s court a better court than that one you took me into?’

“‘I tell you that papa must have his rights even if I am taken before Solomon’s judgment seat like the child that was claimed by two women, and so to settle the dispute the king said: “Cut the baby in two, and give half to one and half to the

other.”’ And when mamma heard me talk like this she got scared and began to cry and promised me on her sacred word that papa should have his half of me. And now I am the happiest girl in the whole city, and I don’t care how much they call me a divorcelet.”

II.

WILL THE KISS BECOME OBSOLETE.

The kiss, *mes bons amis*, has been put to strange uses since its invention. Adam called the dormant Eve to life by a kiss ; Judas betrayed his divine Master with a kiss ; Marc Antony bartered away an empire for a kiss ; Othello kissed Desdemona and then murdered her ; Napoleon kissed Josephine and then divorced her, and Werther kissed Charlotte and then blew his brains out.

Some enemy of our sex hath said :

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“ When a woman contemplates the commission of an unlawful act, she goes to confession,” and I retort by saying : “ When a man has it in mind to be particularly mean or disloyal, he begins with a kiss.”

But, *mes très chers*, I think that we shall be agreed as to one thing, namely : The kiss has ever been endowed with a most subtle and mysterious potency, making for good or evil in about equal proportions, no matter whether like the Magdalene’s it falls upon the feet, or like Penelope’s, on the cheek, or Phryne’s, on the lips ; whether it be like Juliet’s, “ a long, long kiss, a kiss of youth and love,” or like Hero’s, mixed with the double salt of tears and sea water ;

whether it smell of "bread and butter," be flavored like the heifer's breath, with the odor of crunched wild flowers, or give off the strong and heavy perfume of musk or patchouli.

Now the American people are extremely fond of kissing, and not, *comprenez bien*, such kissing as the Russians practise, to wit, setting the lips against the cheek; nor, again, such osculation as is current in France and Germany, namely, the calm and chaste pressure of the lips upon the back of the woman's hand. Nay, far from it. This is hardly called kissing over here.

As my frivolous pupil, Miss Kate, puts it:
"Kissing the hair, or the hand, or the

cheek, or the brow, is no more entitled to be called kissing than executing a *nocturne* on a wireless practise piano would be entitled to be called music. The kiss can only be known when four lips are set in delicious parallel and two souls flash together across this velvet bridge. Such was the kiss that cost Menelaus his Queen, Cleopatra her kingdom, Francesca her life, Sappho her reason and Marguerite a murderer's cell.

“*Mais, chère Mademoiselle,*” continued Miss Kate, “I admit that there is a great deal of promiscuous kissing done in our country, kissing which has no more soul than that land described by the poet as ‘coldly sweet and deadly fair.’ It begins in the nurs-

ery ; later takes on the smell of bread and butter ; later still is flavored with chewing gum and slate pencils ; later still is mingled with the cheap perfume of the poor young man in his first romance, or with the cologne water of the country beau, or with the faint odors of iodoform or carbolic acid hanging about the medical student. Mamma tells me that I must never permit a young man to kiss me on the lips ; that it is positively wrong. Do I obey? *Certainement, Mademoiselle.* I never permit it ; but, suppose I can't help myself?

“You may remember a certain famous placard that was hung upon a wall in your dear Paris: ‘*Défense à Dieu de faire mir-*

acles dans ce lieu. The New York boys are all members of athletic clubs; they may not display very muscular legs when they go spinning along on their safeties; but, *sapristie*, they have good arms and it would be a useless job to attempt to resist them. The struggle would simply result in crumpling one's fichu, collarette or shoulder-poufs, plastering the poor fellow's coat with face powder, disarranging one's bang, and getting one's self worked up into a ridiculous state of excitement, all for nothing.

“So Blanche and I surrender under protest, overpowered, as the military men phrase it, by superior numbers, and in so

doing, Mademoiselle, we obey our mammas and get the kiss into the bargain."

"*Allons donc, bonne amie,*" you exclaim, "what is it you are talking about? You set out, so we imagined, to prove that the kiss is fated to become obsolete, and here you are intoning an epithalamium, chanting a madrigal, or setting your soul to the music of spoken words."

Eh bien, mes chers, to the point; yes, I verily believe that the kiss, as it is described by the poets, and as it is often performed on the American stage—where it not infrequently interrupts the course of the play or opera, causing the audience to sit with parted lips, breathless with the strain of

awakened imagination—is really destined ere many years to become an unknown quantity in highly cultivated circles.

Vous savez bien, mes chers, that I am nothing if not pedagogical, that I am always the school-marm ; hence permit me to be historical. In ancient times people embraced each other. This was before the days of the kiss and before the days of starch. Both men and women wore soft, loose, flowing robes. The embrace was easy, convenient and pleasant. It left no creases in the soft silk or fine linen. Arms could be wrapt around the loved object without doing any harm. But now, *mes chers*, this is all changed. This is the age

of upstanding bows, bristling ruches, ruffles, *bouillonées*, *poufs*, and *choux* of satin ribbon, as it is also the age of stiffly starched cuffs, collars and shirt fronts.

Voilà pourquoi, the embrace long ago fell into poetic impotency. People don't embrace each other any more. The club man is unwilling to appear at the card table at midnight with creased shirt front and flattened cuffs. Lovers stand at arms' length and kiss good night. They may no longer whisper in the language of the great English bard : "Arms, take your last embrace," and then fold each other so closely that they are literally "imparadised in one another's arms."

Ah, *non, mes amis*, nothing of the sort ; all that is past. And so, too, the kiss will go, for complexions are gradually going. In a few decades more the faces of our women will lose their last trace of natural beauty and art will be called upon to make good the loss, to cover the ravages wrought in our so-called civilization. The red will fade from our lips, as it has from our cheeks ; eyelashes and eyebrows will become thin and scattering. Our skin will take on a saffron tone, even in the early twenties, and our eyes lose their sparkle at the same time.

We shall be as if bleached and singed, but, thanks to the ingenuity of man, we

shall be restored to our old-time glory. It will be the work of art, however, and the moisture of the kiss would spot and fleck it as quickly as a child's fingers would mar the beauty of a delicate pastel. The kiss will be obliged to go, go as the embrace has gone, go as the kissing of hands went when the tightly buttoned kid glove came to replace the soft, silken mit, which the lover could so easily draw down to find a warm place for his kisses; go as the toast to sweethearts went when there were no more loose slippers to drink them out of; go as the secret love letters went when there were no more *décolleté* corsages into which to thrust them at sound of mamma's footsteps.

Hélas, mes chers, that it should come to this. And yet my fair pupils, Blanche and Kate, to whom I have made known my apprehensions, merely shrug their graceful shoulders and purse up their pretty lips and say :

"Quelle bêtise, Mademoiselle. Doesn't the all-wise Solomon say that 'to everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven,' and doesn't he also say that there is a 'time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing?'

"Eh bien, nous ne changerons pas cela, jamais de la vie."

III.

OLD MEN'S DARLINGS.

I believe it was witty Sophie Gay who said : "A man of twenty to love me ; a man of forty to defend me ; a man of sixty to pay my bills." But I can subscribe to no such flippant philosophy as that. Many of the world's finest spirits have preserved their flavor and their bouquet 'way into the eighties. It is astonishing what a difference there is between men and women in this respect. Women ripen in a night, while men continue to grow even after they

have shifted into the "lean and slippered pantaloons."

But if there be one art which, more than another, softens and ripens most deliciously in the male mind as it grows old, it is the art of making love. Many of Ovid's most beautiful amatory poems were written after he was fifty years of age, and Swift was nearly an old man when he put forth that beautiful poem in praise of the mysterious Vanessa, and I would be willing to wager that the aged Petrarca, when, seated in his library with his head resting on a book, he dropped off into his last sleep, was meditating some new "mellifluous conceits," in praise of Laura's white throat or vermeil lips.

So steady and miraculous was Goethe's growth as a lover and a worshiper of our sex, that he was nearly sixty years old before he could bring himself to marry a woman, although he had probably made love to more women and made it better than any man of his day and generation.

And now I come to my main question : Why is it that there are so many women, comparatively young and beautiful, who are willing to become old men's darlings ? Our learned countryman, La Rochefoucauld, has stated the fact, but has not explained it. Says he :

“ In their first love affairs, women love their lovers ; in their later ones, what they want is the love, not so much the man.”

Oui, mais pourquoi ? Because, stupid, it is just as I have been telling you. The older a man grows the better he understands a woman. While the young man has simply been studying some one woman, he has been devoting his attention to the sex. His investigations have had all the certainty and nicety which the real scientist puts into his work.

He can button a glove, manipulate a button hook, adjust a veil, tuck a shoulder puff into a jacket sleeve, pin up the gatherings of a skirt, repair a tear with a safety pin, straighten a hat, tie a shapely bow, correct the hang of a skirt, draw on an overshoe or put a rebellious strand of hair into place,

with the skill of a Parisian dressing-maid. Nay, more. He is a charm and a delight in a sick room, and he can braid a lady's tresses, smooth her pillow, make her a cup of coffee that would suit a Frenchman, or a cup of tea that would please an Englishman, cook an omelet, broil a chop, dress a salad, mix a pick-me-up, make a rarebit, or if my lady needs trained nursing, he goes about the business as if he carried his diploma in his side pocket, turns her, lifts her, props her up, and is as mild and patient with her as if she were a sick child ; with no thought of self he dismisses clubs and theatres and horses from his mind and, faithful as a watchdog, sits down by that bedside till the

pale lips part again and the brown eyes open and the old smile comes back and the low, sweet voice speaks his reward :

“Dear old boy, are you there? And you haven't been down to the club to-day? Nor out to the races either? What a fortunate woman I am !

“Why, there was no reason for your giving up all your pleasures. How good you are to me, and yet I am sometimes so cross, so unreasonable, so full of whims and notions. But, dear old boy, I'll be a better girl in the future. I promise you that I will.”

The “ dear old boy ” smiles a bit incredulously, for he really doesn't believe her, and

what is more, he doesn't want to believe her. He knew what he was doing when he married her ; he knew what the price of an "old man's darling" was ; he knew that she would be a luxury ; that she would come high ; but he felt that it would be better than setting his affection on some selfish pleasure.

She might keep him from the card room and supper table, but would he not be the gainer in the end ? Would he not be happier in the enjoyment of her pleasure over a new Paris hat than in his own satisfaction over a championship at whist ?

It is true the world had sneered at his devotion and insinuated that he was the

victim of a pink and white tyranny. It had predicted, too, that they would both tire of their bargain, that there can be absolutely nothing in common between a man of sixty and a woman of five and twenty.

But the trouble with the world is that its judgments are usually based upon facts and figures which are often qualified to deceive. A census taker will tell you how many heads there are in a country, but not how many hearts. They are like witnesses, they must be weighed, not counted.

One of my pupils, the dainty and delicate Miss Blanche, lately assured me that there were quite a number of girls in her set who were bent upon marrying oldish men.

“You see, Mademoiselle,” said this maid of many virtues, “we American women haven’t the strength of our great grand-dames.

“Why, would you believe it, at a family gathering lately I attempted to make my appearance at the *fête* in the heavy, figured silk gown, whaleboned stays, wadded petticoat and ruffled skirts which had constituted a ball costume for a beauty in our family some sixty years ago. I actually fainted beneath the load. Imagine a New York club youngster in the armor of Richard Cœur de Lion, and you will get some idea of how I looked.

“Why, the weight of one of my dancing

dresses, gloves, fan, flowers, slippers and all, is only seven pounds—not much more than the clothes of a year-old babe, if you throw in the silk hood and the long wadded cloak. In a word, we are not made for rough usage, and Monsieur Hamlet would be quite justified in calling us ‘Miss Frailty.’

“Now your ‘oldish man,’ Mademoiselle, is usually a collector, his bookcases are filled with dainty *de luxe* bindings, his cabinets show forth most exquisite bits of carved ivory, eggshell china, Sèvres porcelain and *cinque cento* chasings.

“He has a palm of satin, with a velvet touch, and his fingers close around these

beloved art objects with a contact that is as soft as it is sure, as light as it is loving. Now, we girls want to become '*objets d'art*' to some soulful collector. We long for just such a silk-lined cabinet to repose in, just such a velvet touch when we are lifted out; we want to be handled by a connoisseur—one who will be content to look upon us, to fondle us, to lavish pet names upon us. In other words, *ma chère*, we want to be loved systematically, just as the bibliophile loves his books, not to read them, nor to dog-ear and crumple their white pages, but for the beauty of their letter press, the width of their margins, the artistic finish of their bindings, the exquisite patterns of their

tooling, the wonderful symmetry of their title pages, there to repose in those beautiful cases where the hungry, 'cramming' student may never get at them to rip up their snowy pages with his paper cutter, just like cheap, common, ordinary, everyday books which are made to read."

IV.

THE "DOUBLE X GIRL," OR LOVE IN THE TWENTIETH CEN- TURY.

Paris, *mon Général*, has given us the "end of the century girl," but the "double X girl," or woman of the twentieth century, will come from this side of the Atlantic. Even in the last decade the progress has been enormous over here. Woman has gone into everything, from pulpit to politics, from ranche to race-course, from law to literature, from clubs to calisthenics, from

business to bowling, from cycles to cigarettes. She has mounted the rostrum man-fashion, and she is riding many of the male hobbies in the same way. There is no dilemma that has a horn big enough to frighten her. She will soon be in the saddle—for she is already in the divided skirt—with a foot in each stirrup and a spur on each little heel. Nothing will stop the "double X girl" save another deluge or a thirty years' war. You, *mon Général*, were born to command, but you might as well cry halt to a herd of wild horses as to attempt to stem the progress of this woman's movement.

If it were an insurrection, you might sup-

press it ; if it were a microbe, the chemists might kill it with a new germicide ; if it were a new ailment, the doctors might possibly discover a specific for it, or if it were a bit of Midway Plaisance business, the police might close it up.

But it is none of these, *mon Général* it is a twist of the times, a kink in the mortal coil. You can't get at it ; it is not visible to the human eye ; we can feel it and know it only by its effect. They call it a "movement" over here ; but there is really no "movement" about it, for we don't see it until it gets there.

You, *mon Général*, like the centurion of old, have always been a man of authority,

saying unto one, "Go," and he goeth, and to another, "Come," and he cometh. And you have exercised this authority over your sweetheart, your wife and your daughters and your sisters and your cousins.

But this must all come to an end. The woman of the twentieth century will be a law unto herself. Instead of wishing, like Portia, that she were "a thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich," for some man's sake, she will take care of herself, and tell the man that she expects him to go and do likewise. Love in the twentieth century, *mon Général*, will be quite a different article from what it has been in bygone ages. It will be practical,

reasonable, sensible, judicious and logical. Its gait will be steady, but not fast, and it will not be wobbly on its legs when it comes to a halt. It will be a good roadster, rather than a flyer. The dividends will not be so large, but they will last longer. There will be no pace that kills, but a comfortable jog trot. Love will be sipped, not gulped down, and transports and chills equally avoided.

"The problem which is to be met and solved by the woman of the twentieth century," said a priestess of the reformed cult to me, the other day, "is to get rid of the bad name that has stuck to her for so many centuries. St. Paul is largely to blame for

this, and later, St. Chrysostom took a hand in this abuse of the sex, calling us 'a necessary evil,' 'a natural temptation,' 'a desirable calamity,' 'a domestic peril,' 'a deadly fascination,' and 'a painted ill.' "

"This everlasting threnody has been chanted all the way down to the present day, and the result has been that the poor, dear, innocent mothers have actually poisoned their sons' minds against their own sex, taking up the refrain of the Proverbs, in which women are rarely mentioned save in condemnation. *C'est terrible*, Mademoiselle. The first thing we have to do is to teach the men that we are just as trustworthy, just as reasonable, just as capable

of being "*bons garçons*" as they are, and that, if they will only give us half a chance, we will prove it to them. Up to date the men have actually encouraged us to be fickle, flirtatious and frail and flabby of purpose, and it has been accounted a glory unto us to use our beauty as a snare, our voices like sirens, our kisses like Delilahs, and our caresses like Phrynes. All this must come to an end, and we women must be taught that we can no longer take up something when we have laid nothing down, or that we can reap when we haven't sown.

"But, Mademoiselle," continued this priestess of the new cult, "don't imagine

that, because we shall unlearn those pretty tricks of pouting lip and the tearful eye, that '*ultima ratio feminarum*'—don't, I say, get an idea that we shall not know how to make ourselves necessary to men's happiness. Only it will be a question of 'general utility,' and not as it is now, one of very special and restricted usefulness. In this country the beautiful woman stands the best chance of getting a husband; the rich women comes next. Women who have neither beauty nor money must hustle for a man. They must take up with what they can get—very poor articles, oftentimes—just a little better than none. But thank Heaven," exclaimed the priestess of the

new cult, "the woman of the twentieth century will be a 'wage earner,' and that will command a respect for her greater than she ever enjoyed in the so-called age of chivalry. The 'home,' that monumental dome beneath which man's selfishness reached its greatest development, will fall to ruin, and the kitchen fire, which has always been hot enough to scorch the milk of human kindness, but never hot enough to brown the crust of the home-made pie, will go out; and the nursery, too, that miniature Bedlam, will be closed up. There will be no 'wash-days,' with picked-up dinners. There will be no energies wasted in such senseless contentions as the fashion-

able attire of to-day. Clothes will be hygienic, and food scientific, pleasures rational, and marriage the union of two reasonable creatures, animated by a deep and lasting desire of being helpful unto each other."

Voilà, mon Général. There you have an outline of the new cult—a glance at things as they are to be in the twentieth century. No doubt you stroke your snow-white *mustachios* and exclaim: "*Pardie!* I am quite satisfied with woman as she is in this day and generation. I have no fault to find with her, I admire her neat, trim figure as displayed in a traveling-dress; I look with the eye of a connoisseur on the delicious coquetry of her morning wrapper; I

can grow eloquent over that ripened loveliness which seems as if melted and poured into a reception gown, or I can gaze with an almost rapt and religious feeling upon the delicate and dainty charms of the debutante, bursting from the sheathing of her white tulle like the eager petals of an opening rosebud. *Pardie*, Mademoiselle, I don't see why woman is not a thing of most excellent and admirable perfection just as she is. *A tous les diables* with these reformers, as they call themselves. Show me a 'reformer,' and I will show you a woman who has a grudge against some son of Adam, because her hand pressure evoked no counter squeeze from his flabby palm,

because her smiles lighted no fires in his cold eyes, because her voice awakened no echoes in his dull ears, because her sighs stirred no conflict in his indifferent soul, because her tears lent no softness to his stony heart."

Ah, *mon Général*, you are like the light that shone in the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not. You belong to the old *régime*; but that is past forever. You have loved many women, *mon Général*, and you have been severely wounded, but never by one of Cupid's darts. The padding of your uniform coat has afforded most effectual protection to your heart, and you have timed the intensity of your passions to the stay of your regiment in garrison towns.

Now, the woman of the twentieth century will have no use for a man like you, *mon Général*. As Shylock said, "I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, but I will not eat with you, drink with you or pray with you." So the girl of the twentieth century will say to the young man of that date, "I will read with you, talk with you, sing with you, laugh with you, chaff with you ; but I'll not lark with you, spark with you, nor love with you until you cry with me, 'The little Blind God is dead. Long live Cupid, who can see what he is about.' "

V.

THE "WOMAN'S MAN."

You say you don't understand what I mean by "woman's man." I didn't imagine that you would and therefore I propose to tell you. Know, then, my dear child, that all men are not alike. Some men are good at a trade, others are dabsters at cards, others still are best at a drinking bout. Some men please women, others don't, even when they pay our bills.

Some men are so useful to other men that the other men would rather not be,

than be without them. They are the men who are said to "sleep together."

Some men understand horses, others horned cattle, others fruit raising, and others fish culture. The reason why they understand these things is because they have made a study of them.

But there is one creature in this world that a man can't fully understand by making a study of her, and that creature is woman. And the reason is that man is never willing to study her except when he is in love with her, and when he is in love with her he never studies her with his eyes open.

And therefore, my dear child, strange as

it may appear to you, the only man who ever gets to know a woman is the man who associates with her without loving her, who enjoys her society without paying court to her, who takes pleasure in her company without submitting to the fascination of her manners, who basks in her smile without a thought of tasting the sweetness of her lips, who presses her hand ten times a week and only kisses it once a year.

Fortunate the woman who has such a man on her list of male friends. She will get more comfort out of him than she would out of a dozen lovers. He will never praise her eyes, go into ecstasy over her figure, pass eulogiums on her wit, commend her

grace or laud her manners ; but she will long for him as a man does for an after-dinner cigar and cup of black coffee. Unconsciously she will push his chair in place and thrust her handkerchief into a drawer, knowing that he dislikes perfumes ; but it will never occur to her to put on any particular gown, for she knows that he never looks at such things. In fact, one evening he found her seated in a wicker rocker swathed up from ankles to throat in a deliciously soft bath robe of a delicate cream hue.

She had just left her porcelain tub, and her beautiful feet, arched like a Spanish girl's and blue-veined as Italian marble,

were thrust into pink mules and stretched out on a black satin hassock, which set them off as deliciously as did the ebon pedestal, Galatea's, when Pygmalion's wide-opened eyes caught the first faint tremor of marble turned to soft, warm flesh.

But think you the sight quickened that genial, friendly, customary salute, "How do you do? How have you been?"

Not a bit of it.

He laid some fresh reading matter down for her, telling her of passages he had marked; handed her a statement of some moneys he had collected for her, chuckled over scraps of gossip which she had furnished forth, set her bookshelf in order for

her, and finally, at her request, lighted the alcohol lamp under the tiny nickle-plated teakettle in order to make a cup of tea for her, and never once during the two hours that he sat alongside of her, reading and commenting on what he read, sipping her Japan tea and nibbling an Albert biscuit, did he appear to notice those two exquisitely-shaped bare feet, at one moment laid so coquettishly one over the other, and at another hung half mischievously over the edge of that hassock, with the pink morocco mules balanced so dangerously on the tips of her toes that it seemed at every instant one of them must fall with a gentle clack to the floor and lay bare the tiny foot from

which it had dropped, barer than the hand that now and then rested on the friend's coat-sleeve, for that hand had several rings upon it, and yet there was no uneasiness visible in the man's demeanor, no catching of the breath, no outburst of adoration, no falling upon the knees with a string of kisses for those blue-veined arches of beauty, mixed with a mumbled lot of praises, like a young mother's caresses on her fresh bathed babe.

When he rose to go and stood for a moment beside her chair, she took his long, white, aristocratic hand in hers and patted it and kissed it.

"Oh, Arthur," she murmured, "you are

such a comfortable man. You steal over me like a day dream. Your voice is like a can of condensed music that may be placed on the table, unscrewed, and enjoyed *ad lib.*, and your touch is as gentle as a woman's. I often drop off to sleep while you are reading to me, but I am not really asleep. I don't catch your words, but the rhythm of your voice soothes me like distant singing at midnight. How thankful I am that you never make love to me. I believe I should take a dislike to you if you ever called me by any pet name, or put an 'ie' to the Ruth, or insisted upon holding my hand. But I have something to say to you before you go. Sit down again, please."

At this instant there was a gentle tap on the floor. Something had dropped.

"Oh, Arthur!" she cried, pettishly, "there goes one of my mules. Put it on again for me, please. Thanks. Now sit down here by me. You know the Colonel has been very attentive of late, and I really believe that I shall succeed in bringing him to a declaration. He is a very eligible *parti*, *vous savez*, *mon cher*, good looks, good family, good income; but there's one thing that troubles me, Arthur. I don't know exactly how I shall act when he proposes to me. However, from what I know of the Colonel's tastes, he prefers a gushing, demonstrative, English sort of a girl, in

short, what I suppose would be called a passionate woman. Now, as I think you know, I am not that sort of a woman at all. I belong rather to the calm, steady, placid, well-regulated kind.

“ I think I'm affectionate enough ; but I never fly off at a tangent, but pursue the even tenor of my way in gentle and graceful curves. But still, my dear Arthur, I must please the Colonel. I must make a good effect upon him at this important juncture. If such a man as the Colonel once gets an idea into his head, it sticks there. I hope you realize, my dear Arthur, how very important this matter is to me. You men can make opportunities ; but we

poor women must seize what the gods send us. We must not presume to trifle with Fate.

"She is a woman herself, and while she may permit a man to coquet with her, she allows no one of her own sex such a liberty, and she rarely deigns to offer us a good thing a second time. Many a woman has thrown a pearl away in a dustpan of sweepings because she expected her gem to come to her set in chased gold. So you see, dear Arthur, it is really incumbent upon me to make a favorable impression upon the Colonel if I expect to get a good, strong hold upon my man and bring him finally to the marriage altar,

"You have been very kind to me, dear Arthur, and if you had wanted me yourself you knew that I was always to be had for the asking. But you never wanted me. You are satisfied to go like the children to the raree show, to look but not to touch. Probably you agree with that philosopher who says that 'friends such as we desire ardently are dreams and fables.' You have never found what you wanted and so you only half accepted what you did find. But I count myself very fortunate to be even half accepted by you, dear Arthur. I'd rather be prized by Plato than loved by Don Juan. I'd rather win a Hyperion's smile than a satyr's touch,

The sweetest thing you ever said of me was to apply to me Dick Steele's words about Lady Bessie Hastings that "to know her was a liberal education."

"I have been told by some one that the happiest years of Walt Whitman's life were those which were blessed by a 'friendship-love' for a certain charming young married woman, in whose house, like Dr. Johnson at Mrs. Thrale's, he found not only an unlimited supply of tea, but sponge cake *ad libitum*.

"Like unto your great master, Plato, your soul, dear Arthur, has never put into words that 'something,' that 'delicious longing,' that 'untranslatable expression,'

that 'mysterious yearning,' which you have feared to satisfy lest life lose by its very addition.

"You have feared to lay your head in love's lap, not like Samson, lest you lose your locks, but lest that joy might kill or leave you forever seared. You have accepted love's smiles, but turned your face away when you scented kisses on her lips. You have allowed her to sit beside you, but never permitted the dangerous *vis-à-vis*.

"In a word, my dear Arthur, you have avoided that fire which 'many waters cannot quench,' and have warmed yourself at friendship's safer flame. But for the nonce forget your philosophy, cease to be godlike,

and be plainly human. Put your head down here. I want to practise on you before the Colonel comes.

"Let me throw my arms around your neck. No, not that way. This way, the right arm first. Bother, there go my mules. Don't pull away from me, you foolish fellow. There, there. Was that done well? Were those kisses fiery enough, do you think?

"I really couldn't say, Ruth. I don't know anything about such kisses, except what I've read in books. Good-night."

VI.

THE CYNIC IN PETTICOATS.

Dear Alphonse, if that insufferable bore, Hamlet, had fallen in with a cynic in petticoats, instead of sweet and gentle Ophelia, she would have made a man of him. He pursued that dear girl with a relentless show of pessimistic platitudes, and busied himself working off his cheap cynicism on her when he should have been occupied in making good, old-fashioned love to her. You can always tell when a man is beginning to grow tired of a woman, for he invariably

proceeds to unload his ready-made stock of cynicism. And strange to say, it works his purpose admirably; it paralyzes the most intelligent girl; she can't find any words to ward off the attack. She may deserve her reputation of being the brightest girl in her set, but when some young whippersnapper in dress-coat, flicks the ashes off his cigarette and poses as a Hamlet, who, by the way, jilted an honest girl and then called her Miss Frailty, then I say the fight seems to be knocked entirely out of her. She stands helpless as a babe, and can only do what Mme. de Stael did when that little Corsican cynic made his celebrated reply to her silly question, take her punishment in silence.

It makes my blood boil, dear Alphonse, when I read of a brainy woman being bowled over by some tu'penny platitude of the Solomon or Schoppenhauer school. It is high time that some woman published a book of proverbs. The world has had enough of such male prudes as Marcus Aurelius, Pascal, La Rochefoucauld and Fénelon. If you aim an epigram at a woman you might as well say that she is no better than she should be and have done with it. A woman suffers just as much when you throttle her with her lover's handkerchief as if the common hangman did the business.

This is a mean world, *mon cher*, and it's

time it began to take note of its own meanness. Man has enslaved his black brother as if the latter were responsible for his ebon derm ; he has imprisoned the poor Hebrew for being stoned on the King's highway, and has kept books away from us women and fed us on sweetmeats and then railed at us for being nothing but grown-up children. And last of all, when our kisses have lost their sweetness for him, he has suggested that we give up the *rôle* of Magdalene and try that of Dorcas ; or that we retire from a hard and unsympathetic world and pass the rest of our days with a book of maxims in our hands and a book of regrets in our hearts. Failing in all these he has strutted

about with a parcel of platitudinous pessimisms, as much too big for his mind as the legs of his trousers are for his calves. But *Dieu merci!* all this is now to come to an end, and woe betide any *fin de siècle* Hamlet who attempts to palm off his cynical twaddle on a debutante in her second season, or a Summer girl in her first, such as: "Wise men know well enough what monsters you women make of them." It will not go well with him if he does, for the American girl has made up her mind that she can play the cynic quite as well as he, and that although no woman as yet has compiled a volume of platitudinous proverbs, nor lived in anything nearer to a tub

than a hoopskirt, still cynicism is really very becoming to a woman, as is proved by the character of Beatrice, who is really the most flesh and blood woman that Shakespeare ever drew, the most like a girl of to-day.

Her dainty irony, her delicate sarcasm, her piquant cynicism makes her a thousand times more lovable than the wordy Juliet, the mealy-mouthed Desdemona, the paw-paw Ophelia, the blustering Kate, the prig-gish Portia, the whining Viola or the play-acting Rosalind. I really believe that I have found "Dear Lady Disdain" among my pupils in the person of Miss Fanny B., of Lenox avenue, who is handsome enough

to make the recording angel look up puzzled as to whether she were going out or coming in, but who "cannot endure to hear tell of a husband." This charming cynic in petticoats, dear Alphonse, is a new type of the American girl. She is very unlike your male cynic, for she is very fond of the good things of life and takes genuine pleasure in the machine man of to-day who may be wound up for walk, waltz or whist, for tennis or tattle, for surf, supper or *salon*, for romp, race or ride; but the moment he attempts to make love to her in good earnest, that moment she loses all interest in him. He becomes ridiculous to her; the cross-gartered Malvolio not more so to the

mischievous Olivia. She absolutely hates him, and pleasant as was the excusable embrace of the waltz, the briefest holding of hands now appears flat, stale and unprofitable. She turns on her wooer—not with her pretty, pointed, pink nails thrust angrily out ready to mar his beauty, but with a delicious curl to her vermeil lip, and in her speech an acid just strong enough to sour any young man's hopes:

“So you love me, do you, Archie? and you want me to marry you, too? Of course you know that papa is rich and that he has taken his money out of ‘the Street’ and invested it very carefully. That makes me what you boys call a splendid catch.

You know a good thing when you see it, don't you, Archie? They tell me that you worked like a beaver for several years to make a record as a sprinter in your athletic club. Let me see, it's just two weeks since you were introduced to me on the hotel veranda. I suppose an elopement would have been too expensive or you would have proposed it. I never could abide a thrifty lover, my dear Archie. You might have borrowed the money from papa. It would have been doing him a favor, for wouldn't you have been in the act of taking one of his daughters off his hands?

"My dear Archie, you young men are too good to yourselves. The world may

owe you a living, but, pardon me, if I fail to see why you should expect to have a pretty woman thrown into the bargain. You men have always set too high a value on what you call an opportunity. In the world of speculation you so often get something for nothing that you come to imagine that the moisture of a kiss is a universal solvent which no woman's heart is hard enough to resist. You forget that the kiss was the invention of a woman. When Ganymede tripped and spilt the Olympian nectar Jove ordered that every god and goddess should strike him a blow. Minerva struck him with a strand of her silken hair; Mercury brushed him gently with his wings; Diana

swept his cheek with her dark eyelashes ; Juno dealt him a blow with a feather from one of her peacocks ; Bacchus sent a puff of his wine-scented breath into his face ; Apollo smote him with a sunbeam ; Pluto laid a black shadow across his brow ; Ceres blew a rose petal against his cheek ; Psyche breathed a sigh into his mouth ; but Venus pressed her lips upon his. I'm a daughter of Diogenes, dear Archie, and I'll hunt my lover the way my father did an honest man, with a lantern at high noon. I don't propose to buy a cat in a bag. I want to see whether your teeth are filled, how your beard grows, whether your hair is thin on top, whether you show your gums when

you laugh, whether the end of your nose wobbles when you talk, how many freckles and moles you have on your face, whether your eyes are in focus when you tell me that I'm the first girl that you ever loved. In all earnestness, my dear Archie, I can't be your wife, but I'll be a trained nurse to you when you are taken ill, for then only, so you men say, do we become 'ministering angels.' Possibly I did wrong to let you kiss me, the other night, on the hotel veranda, but I was careful to watch you how you went about it. You are an artist, Archie, and for a man of your age, your technique is astonishing. Nothing but the strictest attention to business could ever

have resulted in such delightful grace of manner and picturesque performance. Your gradient is one of the most charming I ever experienced.

“First you kissed a flower that I tossed you ; then you kissed the hem of my gown as you sat at my feet ; then you pressed your lips upon the tips of my fingers, then upon the back of my hand, then upon the palm ; then you set a silent seal of love upon my hair, then upon my ear, then upon my brow, then upon my cheek, and then, oh, delicious acme of love’s gentlest gradient, you stamped devotion’s invisible trade-mark upon my lips. I thank you for it, dear boy. It was well done and much enjoyed.

“I am well aware, my dear boy, how a young man has to divide himself up to go round, and, like the poor mother in the fairy story, make each one believe that she is getting the largest piece.

“Doubtless you think I’m a hard-hearted wretch. But no, dear boy ; it’s all in my manner. I don’t weep, simply because the girls in our set passed a resolution last winter to be more honest with you men than our grandmothers were. You have paid me the greatest compliment that a man can pay a woman. I would appreciate it more highly if I had not had ten of the same kind since I came to this summer resort. It’s getting to be a bit monotonous.

“If I had accepted you, as my chum Kate did last season, you would have doubtless done me the same honor that you did her, namely, to place your money on the horse whose name commenced with her initial, and put your winnings in an engagement ring. By-by, dear boy, dance the first waltz with me to-night.”

VII.

ARMS AND THE WOMAN.

A deep thinker, my dear Professor, a man very much like yourself, hath most truly and strikingly said: "No women, no wars; no wars, no civilization," and therefore I pronounce Master Maro to have been a big stupid or he would have taken for the subject of his poem "Arms and the Woman," and not "Arms and the Man." I prithee, tell me, was it not the work of a woman that rolled that famous apple in on the dancing floor where the three girls from

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Olympia were tripping the light fantastic ? Was it not sweet Helen's face that launched a thousand ships and burnt the topless towers of Illium ?

Was it not the loss of beautiful Briseis with the dimpled shoulders and matchless limbs that caused Achilles to get that "mad" on him, the reaction from which proved so fatal to Hector ? Was it not the work of cantankerous Queen Bess that led Philip to send the Grand Armada against England, the defeat of which made Albion mistress of the seas ? Would there have been a German Empire to-day had it not been for the whims of Eugénie de Montijo ?

Was it not the money of a rich widow

whom he married that enabled Mohammed to set up a new religion and make converts at the point of the scimeter? Nay, had it not been for the money of the widow Custis the great Washington might have remained an obscure country gentleman, and I might now be giving French lessons in the capital of Her Majesty's loyal province of New York. Let me hear no more about "Arms and the Man." From the beginning woman has been a disturbing element, and without her there would have been eternal stagnation.

She is the leaven that leavens the whole lump. She is the spirit of unrest that keeps the world moving ; her discontent is divine ;

her moods have changed the face of the globe; her tiny slipper is more powerful than the royal mace. A prickly hedge and a barbed wire fence could not have kept Eve in the Garden of Eden, and 10,000 horses could not have held back pretty Jeanne Poisson after she had been told that she was a "morsel for a king." As Marquise de Pompadour, she lived to be virtually the Premier of France, and from her boudoir Louis sent his edicts to the world, smelling strongly of musk, and their margins stained with wine and sweetmeats.

I tell you, *mon cher professeur*, you cannot eliminate woman from the scheme; she is what you scientific men call the "*causa*

causans”—that is, not exactly the cause itself, but the cause of the cause. We French people say, “*Cherchez la femme*,” but I would say, “Feel for the woman,” for she doesn’t always reveal herself to your sense of sight. She is like a cat in the dark. If you want to locate that soft, silken coat and those velvety paws you must feel for them; you must stretch out your hand and dive into the most unexpected holes and corners, and when you come upon her—I mean the cat—you mustn’t drag her out by the hind legs, but you must stroke and caress her and call her “pretty puss,” and she will answer you by a soft, musical purr, and will rub up against you like a velvet hat brush and you will own that cat.

But, my dear Professor, we women have not only inspired war, we have actually waged it. I could name you a number of illustrious women who, unlike Rosalind, did not swoon when they looked on blood. There was Semiramis and Dido and Cleophea, who was brave enough to face Alexander the Great ; and Thomyris, Queen of the Amazons, who whipped Cyrus ; and Boadicea, who thrashed the Romans, and Zenobia, who conquered Egypt, and Vanda, Queen of Poland, who led her troops against Prince Ritagor, and beat him in two pitched battles. You must bear in mind that this is not a question of physical strength. The wise men and lawgivers of ancient times

were not found among the athletes. Great political systems are maintained by prudence, foresight and subtlety, and the female eagle can see as far as the male, and the lioness has even more courage than the lion.

But you cry: "A truce, a truce to all this platitudinizing. I am willing to admit that you women have made a great deal of trouble in the world, and the chances are that you will keep it up till the end. I am even willing to admit that the gentle author of the *Æneid* made a blunder when he declared his purpose to sing of 'Arms and the Man.' Anything for peace in the family."

That is just what I expected from you, you wretch. I suppose if you were sitting beside me, you would kiss my hand and pat my cheek and say: "Don't worry your poor little head about these important questions, *mon enfant*. *Ça ne vaut pas la peine.*"

That's the way with you men. You detest an earnest woman. "Little head" indeed! I may not wear a seven and five-eighths, Mr. Professor, but it's the gray matter that counts, and I have just as much of that as you have. We women refuse to be treated as children any longer. We ask you for bread and you give us bonbons; we ask you for books to make us

wise, and you give us silly novels ; we ask you to talk earnestly with us and you detail the gossip of the day ; we ask you to teach us higher mathematics and you reply that the most glorious straight line in the world is the shortest road to a woman's lips ; we ask you to make us mistresses of the healing art, and you answer that our love is the only medicine that your souls long for ; we ask you to admit us to your legislative assemblies, and you respond by adding new luxury to our boudoirs, by regilding the walls of our drawing-rooms and laying down more costly rugs from the Orient for our feet to rest upon ; we ask you to take us seriously as befits the sex

which has produced its Cornelias, Hypatias, Rolands, De Staels, Sands, Eliots, Wards, and you smile and press a button and order supper with that subtle brew from Epernay in snowy crystals, and you compliment the exquisite fit of our gown and gloves and walking boots, the charming *chic* of our hat, and you lean over and with closed eyes inhale the delicious odor of the roses, wilted by the heat of our white throat, and you raise our gloved hand to your lips and whisper :

“Sweet pet, you look particularly well to-day. Your eyes are filled with a languor potent enough to stay a Francis D'Assisi on his way to prayers ; your cheeks glow with

a peachy bloom, and your lips stand out with the pulpy pout of a girl of sixteen, and your low spirits give a celestial tone to your voice, like the low cry of a repentant peri tapping at the ivory gate of paradise—in a word, my darling, you look lovely and I am proud of you. If you want a new horse, or a new carriage, or a new gown, or a new parure of diamonds, say the word."

Thus it is, wretch, that you meet our overtures when we tire of our frivolous lives and long to become earnest women and share the responsibilities of life with you—hold the plow, walk the furrow, sow the seed, struggle with the weeds and the tares and share the primeval curse with you

and earn our living by the sweat of our faces, wounding our tender hands with the thorns and thistles which an all-wise Providence mingles with the needful grain.

But you will not have it. You relegate us to the gynœcium, the harem, the seraglio, the “woman’s quarters,” the boudoir, literally the “pouting” or “sulking room,” we may not even go to you when we list, but must await your coming.

But, oh ! my brothers, how dearly you have paid for your folly. Kind heaven intended us for your yoke-fellows, for a help “meet for you ;” but you have transformed us into creatures not particularly coy, but deucedly uncertain and hard to please.

You have taught us that there is more music in the rustle of our petticoats than there is in the tones of that "still small voice;" you have loaded us with jewels, clasped our white throats with pearls, set the peerless diamond in our ears and twisted gems of untold value in the tresses of our hair, shod us with sandals of chased silver and placed a jeweled crown upon our head; but brave and beautiful Zenobia walking at the tail of Aurelian's chariot, with glowing cheek and flashing eye, was not more a slave than are we. Our revenge is that what people own, they must battle for. *Cherchez la femme*, feel for the woman. You will find her in the most unexpected nooks and corners.

VIII.

PROFESSIONAL LOVEMAKERS.

If I mistake not, it was that transcendent genius, Dr. Goethe, who once described certain creatures "as lisping like an angel when they lied." The description applies to the professional lovemaker; for such a genuine artist is he that his lies really sound sweet enough to make the listener imagine that some angelic being is uttering them. When I say "professional lovemaker," I don't mean one of your ordinary, every-day summer young men of the hotel veranda

type, who is master of half a dozen set phrases, which he continually brings to the front as a Hindoo prayer wheel does the name of the Divinity, with something of that ‘damnable iteration’ referred to by sweet old Jack Falstaff. Oh, no, no, my dears, such men can hardly be said to be dangerous to a woman’s peace of mind.

I once asked my vivacious pupil, Miss Kate, how it was that she could listen month in and month out to the self-same “stock compliments,” which the so-called society man poured into her ear.

“Why, Mademoiselle,” she cried, “you forget that it is not the man only that interests me ; his clothes also occupy my at-

tention. I study the style and pattern of his ties, the cut of his coat, the hang of his trousers, the shape of his collars and cuffs, the make and fit of his shoes.

“ I endeavor to ascertain if possible what sort of garters he wears, for I never could love a man who allows his socks to bunch down over the tops of his shoes. So you see, Mademoiselle, while some one of the boys is calling me ‘ sweet angel,’ or telling me that ‘ my eyes have Juno’s lids and Hebe’s lashes,’ I am busily engaged in examining his trousers to see if they are properly creased, or am deeply interested in the behavior of his rebellious shirt front, which seems bent upon leaving its narrow

confines and enveloping its black-habited owner in an avalanche of starched linen."

The professional lovmaker to whom I refer, is a sort of Mephisto in dress coat, so thoroughly deodorized and perfumed as to deceive the very elect. He is both devilishly divine and divinely devilish, and truly, when such a lover is telling his biggest whoppers, he "lisps like an angel." What is his object? Why, he is a vivisectionist; he wants to watch the effect of his delicious venom on his beautiful victims.

He is a painter, a sculptor. He is after colorings and contours; he is an anatomist in erotics. He could write a big book on

“The Subtle Art of Kissing a Woman Who Refuses to Be Kissed ;” he could pen a delightful treatise on the “Emotions of a Sentimental Lover Upon the Occasion of His Fiftieth Conquest ;” he could prepare any number of dainty recipes such as: “How to Overcome the Objections of a Pronounced Prude,” “How to Woo a Young Widow,” “How to Approach an *Ingénue*,” “How to Treat a Woman With Too Much Conscience,” “How to Weaken a Devotion to an Ideal,” “How to Deaden a Remembrance for a Lost Love.”

“Charming, charming,” you cry, and demand to know what possible harm there can be in a woman’s receiving the atten-

tions of such a delightful professional. Why, say you, it must be the very quintessence of lovemaking, for all the world like being the heroine of a play and enjoying the passionate outpourings of the leading man's too full heart as he stalks into the room, pale with suppressed emotion, faultlessly clad in a body coat and English trousers, laced patent leather shoes, silk hat and boutonnière of violets, all ready to brush away your last objection with an outburst of highly grammatical English and to catch you up in his arms with some turbulence and press you convulsively to his breast, while he scatters kisses broadcast over the top of your head

and packs your ears with pet names, till you think to yourself, "Why, *mon Dieu*, Tom was only an amateur at this business ; he was as clumsy as a clown, never knew his lines, never came on at exactly the right time, never got his arms in exactly the right position, never suited the word to the action, never was up in the business of the situation, never took the least trouble to work things up to a delicious *dénouement*, a captivating climax. Dear me, what an amount of time I have lost, all from having fallen in with a stupid amateur instead of a genuine professional." Oh, my dears, what poor, weak, unreasonable

creatures you are when there is a man in the case.

You have not changed a hair since the day that Monsieur Satan, the first professional lover, made his afternoon call on Adam's wife, entering the drawing room faultlessly attired, wearing in his button-hole a rare exotic, the like of which had never grown in the Garden of Eden. Now there was no thought in Monsieur Satan's mind that clashed with the divine precept, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife." He was there with no other intent than to amuse himself—for Monsieur Satan is a terrible sufferer from *ennui*—by the exercise of his power as a professional.

Do you imagine for a moment, **my dears**, that it is the love of money that keeps the professional on the stage long after he has accumulated a competence? Why, of course not, you little idiots. It is the exercise of his power that fascinates him and holds him there. And so it is with the professional lovemaker. He never tires of his art. When in the eighties, Goethe exercised his art on a young girl of twenty, and enslaved her as completely as if he were only ten years her senior. Franklin had the same power, and so had Lord Bolingbroke and Mirabeau and Aaron Burr.

Such a man, **my dears**, is incapable of

loving a woman, for the simple reason that he is, heart and soul, in love with himself. His poems dedicated to her and his letters addressed to her, glow with the warmth of an Ovid, burn with the fire of a De Musset, give off the sparkle of a Gautier and the delicious odor of a Keats; but this is all counterfeit; counterfeit of the basest sort, for you could not warm your finger nails at such a flame. At heart he is as cold as

That orb'd maiden, with white fire laden,
Whom mortals call the moon.

You must bear in mind, my dears, that while the professional lovmaker may flatter your vanity, yet you are paying dear for the amusement he furnishes you, for I

insist upon it, that a woman parts with some of her natural sweetness with every kiss she sets upon a male mouth. You may not feel the loss at the time, but the effect is cumulative, as the doctors term it. You are just so much poorer after a *rencontre* with the professional lover.

You have rubbed off a little of your bloom on the lapel of his dresscoat. He is like that black-coated little voluptuary, the bumble bee, which tumbles head first into a luscious lily cup and rolls himself in the golden pollen so that he hasn't strength to fly home until he has kicked some of the sweets off his legs. Doesn't he do any harm?

Is there plenty of the pollen left? Ah, my dears, don't make a mistake, the daintiest nostrils in the world can't sniff at a rose without doing it some harm.

IX.

SUMMER MORALS OF THE NEW YORK GIRL.

Taking my cue from the great Englishman, Shakespeare, who discovered that there could be "method in madness," I set about writing to you to-day, *mes chers*, concerning modishness in immorality. In this land of surprises, morals are largely a matter of temperature. In other words, the thermometer is more or less responsible for petty lapses in great principles. It was an easy task for the Puritan Fathers to lead

correct lives when the mercury registered forty below zero, but it was not many years before the fervency of the New England summer began to tell on the collars and characters of these stern religionists, and the "faith and morals which Milton held" suffered from dog-day weather.

When Schamyl, the stoic king of the Caucasus, visited Moscow and Petersburg and found the Russian women reading French novels and wearing Paris dresses, he looked around for the cause of the corruption. Nor was he long in coming upon it, for every drawing-room was as hot as a Russian bath. In the crisp air of that north land you might, unless warned in time, lose

the tip of your nose, but *hélas, mes amis*, indoors you might lose that of infinite more worth.

Piety in this great city is largely a thing of winter wear ; it looks well in a sealskin shoulder cape, it adds to the grace of a perfectly fitting tailor-made, it sets off a picturesque felt hat ; it serves admirably as garniture to rich, dark colors and heavy ribbed and brocaded stuffs.

The cool atmosphere of a Fifth Avenue church makes you personally comfortable and enables you to give your neighbor a thought.

It is not pleasant to perspire while you are at prayer.

The New York girl knows all this, hence her devotions are about ended when spring cleaning begins and her velvet covered prayer book is packed away in the cedar chest.

As one of my pupils once said to me :
“ Ah, Mademoiselle, it is very hard to love one's neighbor as one's self when you feel sticky and uncomfortable and are quite certain that your hair is out of crimp and that your nose has lost its artistic dull finish, and you feel more like a loose wrapper and a French novel than you do like gloves, veil, and a chapter of that insufferable old growler, Paul, who hated pretty women because his deacons made eyes at them.

“Then again, Mademoiselle,” continued this sweet girl penitent, “churches smell close and musty in summer, an odor altogether so earthy as to be rather unpleasantly suggestive. A dry furnace air well perfumed is more conducive to piety just as velvet and plush incline our thoughts to charity. I am always frivolous in summer stuffs, and for the time being don’t care a rap for my neighbor’s lack of the good things of life. Let him turn tramp and lie down among the daisies for the summer months.” You will be surprised, I know, when I tell you that most American churches close their doors with the coming in of summer, the pastors going to Europe and their

flocks to the watering places. They meet again in October, but I am quite sure they don't exchange confidences. This annual relaxation of the moral fibre, this yearly loss of ethical tone is something peculiarly American ; but the natural result is, as you may readily infer, that the pastor's control over his flock is of the most shadowy kind.

In a few years, *mes chers*, the American clergyman will find himself very much in the position of the old saints in this country—an ornament in stained glass, visible only on state occasions when all the gas jets are lighted regardless of expense.

I have observed that the crop of divorce

suits is always heaviest after the summer season is over.

What are the poor lambs to do when the good shepherd is cooling his parched tongue with a *sorbet* on the *Boulevard des Italiens*, or refreshing himself in the cool pastures of Piccadilly and the Haymarket?

You would be astounded, *mes très chers*, to note the tyranny of mode over here among these children of the Puritans. During the next century I predict that some one Church will become the fashionable cult and that all others will fall into vapid and vague inaction.

It remains to be seen which Church will be astute enough to emulsify the old faiths

with comfortable philosophy and make the compound palatable and easily digested.

When that day comes the summer code will differ greatly from its cold and formal brother, the winter catechism, and you will hear some fair and practical penitent say :
“ As soon as summer comes and the warm weather rules go into force, I shall have an understanding with Jack, and if he can't increase my allowance and buy another horse, I shall be under the disagreeable necessity of placing the matter in my attorney's hands.”

Or, “ When the churches close and I reach the Springs, I shall lay aside mourning, for Tom has been dead now six months

and it does seem so ridiculous to dress like Penelope and think like Phryne.

Or, "Just as soon as warm weather piety comes into fashion I am firmly resolved to get rid of old B. He has lost health and money and I am too young and too pretty a woman to sacrifice my life to mere sentiment. It is perfectly preposterous to expect a woman with my figure and complexion to play hospital nurse when my friends assure me that I am gifted with unusual powers of fascination.

"Old B. has been very kind to me for the past ten years, but he has had his reward—namely, the reputation of having the handsomest wife in town. Now let him step

aside and give some one else a chance, for really the world has a right to its handsome women. They are in a certain sense of the word public property, and if old B. is a reasonable man he will not oppose my divorce proceedings, for he may still continue to take an interest in me and draw a certain consolation from reading of my triumphs at the watering places and of the exquisite toilets of the 'former Mrs. B., of New York.'"

Such, *mes chers*, are samples of summer morality as it will be when once it has become the fashion to do all one's praying in winter, in order that summer fancies may not be clouded by thoughts of too serious things.

It is an admirable arrangement, this division of the year into penitence and pleasure, but it has taken these good Americans two hundred and fifty years to undo the work of their Puritan ancestors, who very thoughtlessly made their religion a part and parcel of their daily lives, so that a young woman was often in doubt whether she ought to laugh or pray, eat or go hungry; or whether it was too near Sunday morning to permit her lover to retain hold of her waist, or whether Sunday had drawn near enough to its close to make kissing permissible.

X.

ELIMINATION OF THE OLD MAID FROM AMERICAN SOCIETY.

Do you know, *mes chers*, that at the very time when I imagine that I am commencing to understand these Americans thoroughly, I am suddenly confounded by my ignorance. They are so many-sided. *C'est étonnant*. One of my pupils, whom I had always looked upon as a genuine widow, took my breath away one day by calmly referring to her husband.

“*Mais mon Dieu!*” I exclaimed. “M.

Boggs," that is his name, "is dead, isn't he?"

"Oh yes, *ma chère*," she replied, as she complacently munched a caramel. "Boggs is dead enough, but Wiggins, my second husband, is very much alive and gives me a great deal of trouble at times. You see, Mademoiselle," she continued, "Boggs had a *penchant* for English blondes and French *excentriques*, so I got a divorce from him which carried a liberal alimony. Then I tried Wiggins. Wiggins proved a failure. Whereupon I Dakotaed him and resumed my former married name, out of gratitude to Boggs, who in the meantime had died, poor, dear boy, but had provided for me in

his will. It is all very plain when you understand it, Mademoiselle."

Vous voyez, mes chers, n'est-ce pas, how many-sided these Americans are?

Well, quite lately, I have discovered another peculiarity in the society of the new world. It is this: That the old maid is being rapidly eliminated from that variable and uncertain organization known as the American family.

In the good old time the unmarried sister of the husband or wife was a sympathetic, tender and picturesque figure in a family. With Parthenia's girdle clasping her slender, aristocratic waist more easily than it would the plump body of a one-year-old babe, the

old maid sat bolt upright at the family table straighter than the quaintly carved back of the dining-room chair, looking like an autumn lily, tipped with the yellow of an early frost.

In her presence no lips were bold enough to drop a *risqué* phrase, no mouth indelicate enough to utter a *double entendre*, no tongue so unruly as to relate a bit of piquant scandal. There she sat, the vestal virgin of the household, the type and sampler of all purity, sweetness and patience to us of the younger generation, the very mirror of female virtue, the mold of gracious femininity. She was as picturesque as the old brass andirons and, with her waxy, trans-

parent skin and snow-white *fichu*, she "furnished" better than any portrait in our ancestral hall.

Don't you remember her, *mes très chers*, don't you remember our dear, unmarried Aunt Cecilia, so thin, so tall, beneath whose tiny, shell-like ears ran such blue veins, and across the backs of whose hands veins that had never swollen beneath a warmer kiss than her brother's? Don't you remember her great, blue eyes, so deep and limpid, eyes that had never clouded beneath a lover's glance, her slender figure slowly shriveling 'neath the chill of an ungained love, like an unplucked apple touched by an October frost? How sweet and sad

her smile was and what a perpetual benison it was ! Well, one morning I entered her room without knocking and surprised her *en corset*. I was astounded, and I recollect how I stammered out an apology as I stood and gazed upon the dying glory of that beautiful form.

“ Why, Aunt Cecilia,” I murmured, ‘ what a lovely neck ! what exquisite arms ! what an angelic skin ! *Bon Dieu*, do tell me why you never got married.”

“ Ah, *chère enfant*,” she sighed, “ I could not do as they do now, pick out a husband as you do a pair of shoes and turn over the whole stock until you think you are suited, and then when the first pair pinches after

wearing it a little while, kick it off and get another pair. No, I couldn't get what I wanted, so I went without any. *Voilà tout !*" she added, with a shrug of those beautiful shoulders.

Eh bien, mes chers, this picturesque personage has ceased to exist on this side of the Atlantic. How it came about, you ask? Simply enough: The moment the grass widow was accorded recognition, that moment there was no longer any *raison d'être* for old maids in American society. Facility of divorce has changed the whole nature of this social problem, has put an entirely different aspect on the marriage question. From being a "responsibility," an "affair

of some moment," a "relation not to be entered into lightly," marriage has become a mere accident, a mere attitude, a mere Delsartean pose, to be affected so long as becoming and no longer. In the next century women will marry as they now bleach their hair or drop one Church and take up another, or make trial of a new diet to improve their complexions.

By which I mean to say that marriage will lose its terrors and become a merely æsthetic juxtaposition, and there will no longer be any reasonable excuse for or extenuation of the existence among us of maids of mature growth. We shall go through the "matrimonial experience," as

it is often called over here, just as we now do through re-inoculation for smallpox, or as we change our business or do some important thing or other to increase our chances for happiness and comfort.

For several years there was numbered among my pupils a charming married lady, who inhabits an extensive apartment and has about her a delightful social set. I never miss one of her evenings at home, for there is just a perceptible tinge of Bohemianism about this circle that quite charms me. And yet, would you believe it, in all these years I have never had the pleasure of meeting "*Monsieur.*" The cards always read, "Mr. and Mrs." However, one day

over a cold *demi-bouteille* and a sandwich, noting that the "Mrs." was in a particularly expansive mood, I screwed up my courage and said: "But, *chère amie*, why is it I never meet '*Monsieur*?' Where does he keep himself?"

"Well, really, *Mademoiselle*," she said, with a little gurgle of complete satisfaction, "I don't know, I haven't seen him for seven years. I'm told that he passes most of his time in Paris."

"Are you divorced?" I queried.

"Oh, dear, no, *chère enfant*," she laughed, "we are about as much separated as we can be now. He belongs to a good family and I like the standing that his name gives me ;

in a word, Mademoiselle, I am married just enough to protect me from those I dislike, and to hold fast to those that I do."

"*Mariage esthétique?*" I suggested.

"*Parfaitement !*" she made answer.

XI.

AFTER THE BICYCLE GIRL, WHAT?

I sometimes think, *mes très chers*, that men have been very severe on us women. Saith the preacher :

“ One man among a thousand have I found, but a woman among all those have I not found.”

Pretty severe judgment, *n'est-ce pas ?* It was an English poet who defined marriage to be “ a kiss and a vow to be everlastingly miserable together.” We are charged with

having seduced all mankind, with being at heart rakes, with being another name for frailty, and it is said that sheol hath no fury like unto one of us scorned.

From cover to cover the good book bristles with warnings to us. We may not uncover our heads in public. Our long, flowing hair is termed a nudity. Think of it. The napes of our necks must be carefully covered. We must not ask questions except of our husbands and fathers at home, and when we walk abroad we must not show the symmetry of our ankles, nor rattle our heels on the pavement.

I recollect one day being severely reprimanded for having bitten into an apple and

handed it to a young male cousin who was visiting us.

“*Fi donc*, Claire !” exclaimed my dear, good mother ; “dost not know that Adam was undone by just such a kiss at second hand ?” And don’t you remember, too, *mes chères*, how often our poor, dear mother would bid us “sit up straight and keep our knees together ?”

“Oh, it was so hard to do the proper thing, to stand meekly and quietly by when the boys were riding broomsticks, waving laths for swords and charging the stray swine in the highway.

On one occasion, carried away by the enthusiasm of the moment, I mounted a

broomstick, boy fashion, and galloped off after the others.

Bon Dieu! What a reprimand I received. It was bread and water for three days in a darkened room.

“*Mais chère maman,*” I whispered, “*la Pucelle* (Maid of Orleans) rode man fashion.”

“True, my child, she did,” replied my mother. “*Mais c’était seulement dans cette manière qu’elle pouvait y arriver,*”—that is to say, it was the only way she could get there.

And that’s what the bicycle girl says to-day—it’s straddle or nothing. Grandmamma’s advice has been thrown to the winds. Lovely woman has won her biggest victory,

for after the bicycle, what is there to set metes and bounds to her progress? Is not the boundless universe hers now? It is not the first time a great question has been solved by a straddle, either, *mes bons*.

The poor men stand by with hands lifted up in holy horror. The veriest *roué*, the most hardened clubman, the most accomplished worldling, catches his breath and blushes, as the bicycle girl flits by him, her trim ankles glancing in the sunlight, and her fine figure poised in graceful equilibrium. He feels instinctively that she is nearer the goal, that she is closer upon his heels than ever before; that nothing will now satisfy her until her chair is tilted and her neat

little buttoned boots lined up with his patent leathers in the club window.

Hence, I ask: After the bicycle girl, what? And I ask it in all seriousness, for I consider that the bicycle girl is proof that woman has firmly made up her mind to break away absolutely and entirely from the "disabilities" which man has put upon her in his various schemes to keep her in a condition of tutelage.

The bicycle girl is but a foretaste of woman as she is to be in the middle of the next century.

To grandmother's advice: "Sit up straight, don't cross your legs, keep your knees together," now comes this response:

“*Bah, vous m'ennuyez*, with your old-fashioned twaddle. From this time on we women intend to use our minds and our legs as we see fit. We have as much right to straddle a wheel as you men have, and when mounted thereon we don't look any more ridiculous than you do ; in fact, *Messieurs*, we make a better showing than you do. But, *Messieurs*, we don't propose to stop here ; we propose to do away with the dangerous side saddle and ride our horses as we do our bikes—each leg where it will do most good. We are what heaven hath made us and we see no reason for being ashamed of it. By the middle of next century we shall patronize the same tailor, the

same shoemaker and the same hatter. Our underclothes will be of the same style; your shirts and ours will vary only in size; we shall be able to loan each other a collar or a tie, or a handkerchief or a pair of socks. *Poudre de riz*, cosmetics, and the corset of to-day will be relegated to the keeping of the attic store-room along with the ridiculous finery of our grandmothers. We shall be, however, neither minotaurs nor monsters, but healthy, graceful, well-developed women who will be just as fond as ever of the pressure of that divine circle (a good, stout, manly arm), and the exquisite titillation of a pair of strong, ripe, wholesome lips, pressed respectfully, devotedly, reverently and in rapturous parallel upon ours.

But, *Messieurs, prenez garde*, there must be no more trifling, no further issuance of the false tokens of love. Both sexes will stand exactly upon the same level, and the emotional dissembler, be he man or woman, will be classed with the forger and counterfeiter, and the brand of shame be set upon him or her. We shall be harder to win, but worth more when got; more reasonable, more serviceable, more companionable, more enjoyable. Between our attire and yours there will be about as much difference as between the plumage of the male and female bird. Only ours will be the gaudier and not yours, as in the case of the birds. We shall have no pleasures,

no amusements, no recreations except in common, and, although we shall not, as did the Spanish women in the Middle Ages, make use of plates of lead to flatten our busts, yet our figures will most surely undergo a change. Juno and Ceres will part with their plenitude of charm; Venus surrender up her look of over-ripeness; Diana do a little banting, and Minerva grow somewhat less in bust measurement.

The successor to the bicycle girl, the middle of next century girl, will be a delicious compound of Hebe and Ganymede—the boy woman, with the eyes of a heifer and the voice of a contralto, with the face

of a gentle lad and the limbs of a female trapeze performer; with the teeth of a young dog, the cheek of a peasant lass, and the breath of a cow that has been nibbling wild mignonette. When this happy day dawns the ordinary love songs of to-day will sound as ridiculous as the tender passages of the Song of Solomon do to us now. And yet, *Messieurs*, don't be solicitous, for we shall be just as lovable as Juliet, just as kissable as Kate, just as adorable as Beatrice, just as fascinating as Rosalind, just as entrancing as Cleopatra, just as huggable as Cressida, who had "language in her eye, her cheek, her lip—whose very feet could talk."

XII.

GARDEN PARTIES, OR FLIRTA- TION AL FRESCO.

Did it ever occur to you, *mes très chers*, how men differ in their selection of love's trysting place? One of *our* countrymen prefers a "*cabinet particulier*" in some charming road-house, where he may make love over a little cold fowl and a small bottle; a Spaniard meets his *chère ami* at a bull fight, an Italian follows her to mass, a German selects a picnic, an Irishman, the sidewalk, an Englishman or an American

takes to the woods, or next best place, to the garden. Shakespeare's plays are full of forests and gardens and bowers.

The garden party wasn't invented; it grew.

When a celebrated educator exclaimed: "Give us more books for our children; they are mentally starved," an American mother rejoined: "Give us more young men for our daughters; they are heart-hungry."

Ah, *mes chers, quel plaisir*, it is for a girl to have a bank of real clay to dig her French heels into when Jack or Charlie gets hold of her gloved hand and his breath comes to her cheek sweetened by the birch

twig he has been chewing, and there is no danger of being overheard and no clock to strike or door to slam just as he draws near to that dread yet delightful declaration which sounds sweeter to a girl every time she hears it !

That Englishman was wrong when he said that in the spring a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of love.

July and August are the lover's months. By that time everything is rosy red, and red, you remember, is "love's proper hue."

May is too green, and June is a bit too damp to sit on the ground.

Miss Blanche, whom I'm chaperoning, says that the ground is the proper place to

sit when a young man is making love to you. There is nothing to creak there, and while the girl should sit discreetly upright, the boy may throw himself down his full length, and by supporting his head on his hand, bring it quite, if not exactly, where Hamlet laid his—in Ophelia's lap.

Men look well in such an attitude, while women need upholstery to display their grace—a sofa, a divan, a *chaise longue*.

Nature smells the sweetest 'twixt high noon and twilight. Then the sun has awakened every perfume and the flowers—languid in the day-god's fiery embrace, give forth their odors like perfumed sighs.

One of the first men that I met at this

garden party was Reggie W., who married a big block of Chemical Bank Stock a few years ago, and whose wife assures me that Reggie's club dues aggregate a thousand dollars a year.

Reggie wore an immaculate white flannel suit—a garb greatly affected by male flirts at American watering places. *On dit*, that this material doesn't wrinkle, and, of course, doesn't show face powder. And moreover, that a man in white flannel is particularly attractive to a woman. Goethe says that a blouse of a certain texture and color has potency to enhance the charm of an embrace.

Possibly white flannel may act the same way upon a maiden's fancy.

Reggie was delighted to meet me, and immediately offered to introduce "something very choice" to Miss Blanche.

"*Vous comprenez, Mademoiselle,*" said he, as he escorted me across the lawn, "these garden parties are simply delightful for young people. It must be the oxygen, I think, for a fellow never has his wits about him in a stuffy, overheated drawing-room. Why, bless my soul, give me a likely widow and I really believe I could say sweet things to her myself under the influence of this delicious atmosphere.

"The trouble with our American marriages, Mademoiselle, is that, *ça sent les doubles extraits*, as you say in your language.

I mean that the senses are moved, not the soul. If I am to 'die of a rose in aromatic pain,' I don't want the attar, I want the real thing, long-stemmed and plenty of them. I want real violets, not orris root.

"Why, Mademoiselle, there is as much difference between a declaration of love *al fresco*, and what our boys call an 'understanding' entered into between dances while sitting on the stairs, as there is between a Maryland planked shad and a fried section from an ordinary boarding-house. I believe it was Byron who said, 'there is a pleasure in the pathless woods.' Bah! not half so much as in a graveled walk with a comfortable rustic seat shaded by wide-reaching branches, a good string band in

the distance and a glass of champagne punch and a lady's finger to loosen tongues and give the two young souls a fair start."

"*Mais, mon Dieu, où est donc Miss Blanche?*" I ejaculated, starting up and looking around for my pupil.

"Oh, she strolled away across the lawn with young Archie G.," replied the clubman. "Archie's all right," he continued. "A capital youngster. Don't be the least bit alarmed, Mademoiselle.' "

"*Mais, Monsieur*, he's a perfect stranger to Miss Blanche."

"Not by this time, Mademoiselle. It's half an hour since I introduced him to her."

“*Quelle horreur !*” I exclaimed, indignantly, as I hurried away in search of Miss Blanche.

In a moment or so I espied a pair of tiny white canvas shoes projecting out from behind a clump of shrubbery. Blanche was seated on the ground and Archie was stretched out full length beside her. A pile of empty ice cream plates was standing on the rustic seat near at hand, while the skirts of Blanche's white serge were literally snowed under with the burning petals of a bunch of American Beauties which she had fastened on her corsage upon leaving the house.

She had pulled every one of the roses to

pieces. Archie's hat was lying on the grass and Blanche's gloves had been tossed into it ; her book lay on the rustic seat with his cane across it ; his regiment badge had been transferred from its place on his breast to a spot as near over Blanche's heart as possible ; the corner of her handkerchief peeped out of his side pocket ; the diamond ring worn on his little finger glistened on the third finger of her left hand ; the collapsed puff of one of her sleeves told that Archie's head had been against her shoulder ; her King's Daughters' badge dangled from his watch chain ; his penknife was in her hand and she was whittling a birch twig ; her fan was in his

and he was twirling it nervously; the laces of one of her tiny white canvas shoes was tied man-fashion; the bunch of white asters which I had noticed in his button-hole was held lovingly against her throat by a clasp-pin; a bit of pink ribbon clipped from her hat string was tied in his button-hole; a feather from her boa was thrust into the band of his broad brim; his silver cigarette case glistened in her lap and a single golden hair from the glorious treasure of her poll lay on his breast, caught in the nap of his white flannel coat.

“*Mais, bon Dieu!*” I gasped in unutterable bewilderment, “how did those two children get mixed up in that style in one

brief half hour?" Not until we had reached our carriage and I had my charge safely by my side did I dare to draw a long breath.

But imagine my feelings when Blanche suddenly threw her arms around me and murmured in soulful accents: "Isn't he delightful, Mademoiselle? We are to be married in November."

THE END.



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